

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 25, 2001**

The Program Policy and Structure Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, July 25, 2001, at 11:00 a.m. The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Kenneth Jackson of the New York State Department of Health. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to address items of importance as identified in the committee's previously distributed agenda.*

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Dr. Jackson began the meeting with a roll call of attendees and reviewed the minutes from the previous teleconference which was held on June 27, 2001. The minutes were approved as written.

Mr. Clifford Annis was welcomed as a member of the Program Policy and Structure Committee, having received his appointment letter from the NELAC chair.

AGENDA ITEMS

Field of Accreditation Tables

The committee reviewed the general structure of the "Field of Accreditation" table that Dr. Jackson had distributed prior to the call. This table is ordered by analyte and is based on the Field of Accreditation list that was on the NELAC Website. Because there have been updates since this was completed, Dr. Jackson will distribute a revised table with the necessary corrections. The committee discussed the idea of adding a fourth column, "Field of Accreditation Code" and there was also discussion about the need to include preparation methods. Since only New Jersey and Utah accredit preparation methods at the present time, after some discussion it was decided that the preferred method would be to have the preparation method listed separately. Mr. Arthur Burton will prepare revised tables to include preparation methods, Mr. Andy Eaton will handle the drinking water section of the tables and Dr. Jackson will start on metals, organics, and categories that haven't already been covered. The committee proposes to have the tables ready by the Seventh NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 7i).

Data Integrity Program

Mr. Burton gave a brief review of the work of the Data Integrity Task Force which has about eight or nine people on it. They have had one teleconference in which they discussed Chapter 1, Program Policy and Structure and Chapter 5, Quality Systems. There was discussion about how to approach the Quality Systems Committee and Ms. Jackie Sample was named as a key person. Action items for the Data Integrity Task Force include getting the text written and listing the laboratory standard operating procedures (SOPs).

For Chapter 1, only one or two paragraphs need to be written. It will be necessary to present the

rationale in this chapter and the ground rules. In Chapter 5 the topic can be expanded on to include a system approach. Another action item for the Data Integrity Task Force includes contacting Dr. Fred Siegelman with the Quality Systems Committee.

Data Validation Guidelines

These are currently in the proposal stage and the committee is accepting comments. The purpose of these guidelines would be to catch data manipulation at the early stage. Ms. Nancy Wentworth and Mr. Jerry Parr are the contact people for this part.

PBMS Subcommittee

Dr. Jackson and Ms. Lara Autry are serving on the Performance-Based Measurement System (PBMS) this subcommittee and can be contacted about the data validation aspect.

Surveillance

This topic was discussed at the Seventh NELAC Annual Meeting (NELAC 7) – it is very important that a laboratory be able to document and review their surveillance records.

Ethics

The subcommittee felt that the NELAC Standards would be the perfect place to develop an ethics policy. Chapter 5, Quality Systems, could be utilized to provide specificity. The American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL) would like to get the “ethics” problem solved at the NELAC stage (front-end) and therefore it would not become an “enforcement” issue.

Training

There was also some discussion about covering the issue of ethics during the training phase. This would involve determining what is ethical and what isn't.

Manual Integration

There was discussion that this can be an issue of over-reaction and can lead to calling for third-party interpretation.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Proficiency Testing (PT) Committee is looking at the analyte groups so that issue will be addressed once the Program Policy and Structure Committee has their input.

The NELAC Board of Directors has been reviewing the NELAC policies and the Program Policy and Structure Committee may be receiving a request to incorporate some of the policies into Chapter 1. The intent is to have the wording prepared in time for NELAC 7i.

FUTURE TELECONFERENCES

The teleconference scheduled for August 8th may be cancelled depending on whether or not the PT Committee has the analyte groups completed. Otherwise, the next teleconference will be August 22nd.

ACTION ITEMS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Dr. Jackson will revise Field of Accreditation tables to include updated information from website.	
2.	Mr. Burton will revise the Field of Accreditation tables to add the preparation method(s) for all but Drinking Water.	NELAC 7i
3.	Mr. Eaton will revise the Field of Accreditation tables to add the preparation method(s) for Drinking Water.	NELAC 7i
4.	Dr. Jackson will begin compiling the Field of Accreditation tables for metals and miscellaneous analytes.	NELAC 7i

**PARTICIPANTS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
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Name	Affiliation	Address
Jackson, Kenneth Chair	New York State Dept. of Health	T: (518)485-5570 F: (518)485-5568 E: jackson@wadsworth.org
Aiello, Joseph (absent)	New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection-OQA	T: (609)633-3950 F: (609)777-1774 E: jaiello@dep.state.nj.us
Annis, Clifford	Merck and Co. Inc.	T: (215)652-8118 F: (215)652-2291 E: clifford_annis@merck.com
Autry, Lara	USEPA/OAQPS	T: (919)541-5544 F: (919)541-2357 E: autry.lara@epa.gov
Burton, Arthur	Sequoia Analytical Laboratory	T: (408)782-8167 F: (408)782-6308 E: aburton@sequoialabs.com
Eaton, Andrew	MWH Laboratories	T: (626)568-6425 F: (626)568-6324 E: andrew.eaton@mwhglobal.com
Ferko, Mark (invited guest)	New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection-OQA	
Giesler, Barbara (absent)	New Mexico Environment Dept (NMED)	T: (505)827-0152 F: (505)827-0160 E: barbara_giesler@nmenv.state.nm.us
Hogan, Mary Ann (absent)	Crystal Clear Ltd.	T: (302)655-8659 F: (302)655-8519 E: mahogan@home.com
Rosecrance, Ann	Core Laboratories	T: (713)328-2209 F: (713)328-2157 E: arosecrance@corelab.com
Sorbet, Elaine	Louisiana Dept. of Environmental Quality	T: (225)765-2406 F: (225)765-2408 E: elaines@deq.state.la.us
Askew, Suzanne (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: (919)541-7039 F: (919)541-7386 E: lsa@rti.org